What is claimed is:

1. For use in a cable television converter terminal, a passthrough circuit for passing a tuned signal from a tuner to a radio frequency modulator for output to external equipment, the passthrough circuit arrangement comprising:

a first signal path, arranged to receive the tuned signal from the tuner and to provide a NICAM signal component of the tuned signal to the radio frequency modulator; and

a second signal path, arranged to receive the tuned signal from the tuner and to provide at least one other signal component of the tuned signal to the radio frequency modulator.

2. A passthrough circuit, as claimed in claim 1, wherein the first signal path comprises a NICAM surface acoustic wave filter, coupled to receive the tuned signal from the tuner and configured and arranged to pass a NICAM signal component of the tuned signal and to substantially reject non-NICAM signal components of the tuned signal.

3. A passthrough circuit, as claimed in claim 2, wherein the NICAM surface acoustic wave filter outputs

a signal to a mixer which is set at a selected frequency using a crystal oscillator.

4. A passthrough circuit, as claimed in claim 1, wherein said first signal path comprises an alignment-free filter coupled to receive the tuned signal from the tuner and configured and arranged to pass a NICAM signal component of the tuned signal and to substantially reject non-NICAM signal components of the tuned signal.

5. A passthrough circuit, as claimed in claim 2, wherein the first signal path further comprises a mixer, coupled to receive the NICAM signal component passed by the NICAM surface acoustic wave filter, and configured to downconvert the NICAM signal component to a baseband NICAM IF frequency.

6. A passthrough circuit as claimed in claim 5, wherein the NICAM IF frequency is one of 6.552 MHz and 5.85 MHz.

7. A passthrough circuit as claimed in claim 5, wherein the first signal path further comprises a low pass filter, coupled to receive the downconverted NICAM

video signal components to the radio frequency modulator.

9. A passthrough circuit as claimed in claim 8, wherein the second signal path further comprises an operational amplifier arrangement, coupled between the dual surface acoustic wave filter and the audio and video amplifier, configured and arranged to further amplify the amplified filtered signal.

10. A passthrough circuit as claimed in claim 1, wherein the first signal path is constructed as a unitary circuit module.

11. For use in a cable television converter terminal, a passthrough circuit for passing a tuned signal from a tuner to a radio frequency modulator for output to external equipment, the passthrough circuit arrangement comprising:

a NICAM surface acoustic wave filter, coupled to receive the tuned signal from the tuner and configured and arranged to pass a NICAM signal component of the tuned signal and to substantially reject non-NICAM signal components of the tuned signal;

signal component from the mixer and configured and arranged to attenuate mixer harmonics from the downconverted NICAM signal and to provide a NICAM output signal to the radio frequency modulator.

Subal 8. A passthrough circuit as claimed in claim 1, wherein the second signal path comprises:

a channel surface acoustic wave filter, arranged to receive the tuned signal from the tuner and to filter the tuned signal to generate a filtered signal;

an intermediate frequency strip, configured and arranged to amplify the filtered signal;

a dual surface acoustic wave filter, configured and arranged to separate the amplified filtered signal into audio and video signal components;

an audio and video amplifier, operatively coupled to the dual surface acoustic wave filter and configured and arranged to amplify the audio and video signal components; and

an audio/video demodulator, configured and arranged to downconvert the amplified audio and video signal components to their respective baseband frequencies and to provide the downconverted audio and

a mixer, coupled to receive the NICAM signal component passed by the NICAM surface acoustic wave filter, and configured to downconvert the NICAM signal component to a baseband NICAM IF frequency; and

a low pass filter, coupled to receive the downconverted NICAM signal component from the mixer and configured and arranged to attenuate mixer harmonics from the downconverted NICAM signal and to provide a NICAM output signal to the radio frequency modulator.

12. A passthrough circuit as claimed in claim 11, wherein the mixer is set at a selected frequency using a crystal oscillator.

13. A passthrough circuit as claimed in claim 12, wherein the selected frequency is one of 45.75 MHz and 38.9 MHz.

14. A passthrough circuit as claimed in claim 11, wherein the baseband NICAM IF frequency is one of 6.552 MHz and 5.85 MHz.

15. A passthrough circuit as claimed in claim 11, wherein the NICAM surface acoustic wave filter, mixer,

and low pass filter are constructed as a unitary circuit module.

16. A signal processing circuit in which a first component of a signal is separately processed, the processing circuit comprising:

a first signal path connected between an input terminal and an output terminal, said first signal path including a first processing circuit for processing said signal and providing a first processed signal to said output terminal; and

a second signal path connected between said input and output terminals, said second signal path comprising a alignment-free filter for passing substantially only said first component of said signal and a second processing circuit for processing said first component of said signal and providing a second processed signal to said output terminal.

17. A circuit, as claimed in claim 16, wherein said signal is an audiovisual signal and said first component is a NICAM digital audio signal.

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